

PNZ Executive Nominee: Clare Foster



After graduating in England (1987) and working in paediatrics, my New Zealand emigration gave me the opportunity to gain the Postgraduate Diploma in Manipulative Therapy, acupuncture registration and own and operate a private practice. Whilst completing a Masters in Management (quality, organisation and communications) I held lead auditor, operations and quality management roles in both a DHB and a group private practice. I understand the legal, professional and public obligations that guide and contain our work through effective governance. Working in Melbourne under a different health system by contrast showed me the safety and assurance that the public and funders have in Physiotherapy New Zealand.

The value of being a New Zealand physiotherapist was further highlighted to me whilst volunteering for two years in Malaysia with the UNHCR treating conflict refugees. Internationally New Zealand physiotherapists are held in high regard. We are able to provide care for others with minimal resource anywhere, reaching people wherever they are and guiding them through all stages of life. Our knowledge spans many dimensions.

My current clinical work within a DHB community centre has shown me the value of our varied skill set as the demand and complexity of our work increases. Thirty years of clinical practice have shown me that we have the knowledge and experience to effectively meet the demands of growing health care needs in the community. We are all valuable, whether specialising or generalising. It is not only in the specialist roles but in the breadth and depth of generalization that we remain flexible and responsive to a changing health environment.

If elected I will work to see all physiotherapists are recognised not only for their caring ethic but the dependability, flexibility, generalist and specialist skills so that physiotherapists are assured of a rewarding and sustainable working life.